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A Sermon Preach'd on the
Anniversary of the Martyrdom
of King Charles the First

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FREDERIC THOMAS BLANCHARD
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A SOMERSET.

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

Lords Spiritual and Temporal

IN

PARLIAMENT Aſſembled,

AT THE

Collegiate Church

OF

St. *Peter's Weſtminſter*,

On *Monday January* 30, 1720-21.

Being the ANNIVERSARY of the MARTYRDOM of King *CHARLES* the *Firſt*.

By BENJAMIN, Lord Biſhop of *BANGOR*.

LONDON:

Printed for JAMES KNAPTON at the *Crown*, and TIMOTHY CHILDE at the *White Hart*, in St. *Paul's* Church Yard. MDCCXX.

R. Dr Benjamin Hoad

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1 *Ep.* to the *Cor.* X *Ch.* the former Part of the 11th Verſe.

Now all theſe Things happened unto Them for Enſamples.

YOU will eaſily perceive, from my chuſing theſe Words as an Introduction to what I am now going to ſay, That it is my Deſign to make uſe of that Black and Unhappy Part of our *Engliſh* Hiſtory, which we are commanded by Authority to call to mind on *this Day*, in ſuch a manner, as to make ſuch Obſervations upon

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upon it, and draw ſuch Leſſons from it, as may be of moſt ſervice to our ſelves, in order to prevent and avoid thoſe Things which *happened unto* our Forefathers, *for Enſamples* to Us their Poſterity: juſt as the Unhappineſſes and Wickedneſſes of the *Jews* in former Ages, are here in the Text ſet before the Eyes of their Followers by St. *Paul*.

To open unneceſſarily any old Wounds that are now cloſed up, and make them bleed afreſh; To widen any that are now open, and to inflame them ſtill more and more: Theſe Things are as far from my Inclination and Temper, as They are contrary to All that I know of Religion. I had much rather pour Oyl into Any That remain, and apply nothing but ſoft and healing Medicines: Nay, if it were poſſible, I would caſt a Veil over

over every Mark of paſt Infamy, or even Imperfection, on all Sides; were it not for fear, We might at the ſame time loſe ſome of the Beſt Leſſons and moſt Uſeful Obſervations for our own Conduct.

To run with Violence againſt Any One ſort of Men now in being: To fix the Guilt of *That* upon All of one General Denomination, which All the Chief of them deteſted by a public Remonſtrance at the Time of the Tranſaction: To lay *That* upon the *Generality* of a Nation, which even in the *Firſt Zeal* againſt it, was declared by public † Authority to be the Work of a *Few* at that Time poſſeſs'd of Power: Or, To load with all poſſible Aggravations the unjuſtifiable Proceedings on *One* Side only, and to clear the *Other* of every thing that looks

† *Proclam.* King *CHARLES* II. 1660.

like

like Guilt: Theſe are Points, which common Juſtice and Equity (not to mention Compaſſion and Charity) forbid Us to do.

But to teach Our ſelves to avoid what we rightly blame in Others; to take Care that True and Juſt Principles of Public Good do not ſuffer in the Eſteem of Men, thro' the Miſtakes or Wickedneſs of Such as were Strangers to them, or only pretended to make uſe of them; and that the Memory of *True Patriots* may not be curſed, for the Sake of the *Infamy* of *Uſurpers* ruling by mere Power and Arm'd Force: To learn, from the Review of former Unhappineſſes, every Thing that can be of Uſe to help Us in the Preventing Any the like Miſeries for the Time to come, or the Curing any preſent Evils: *Theſe*, and the like, are *Points* worthy of Perſons concern'd

cern'd for the Good of their Country; and Such, as may render this Fast, not a *Fast for Strife and Debate*, nor merely a Fast for *Shame* and *Reproach*; but a *Day* of Useful Instruction in the Paths which lead to Public Peace, and the Establishment of all that is valuable in humane Society.

The main Points which *this Day* recalls to our Minds, I shall connect together in the following Manner, in order to introduce the Observations I design: ----That there was, in the *Days* of our Forefathers to which we now look back, a Zeal in the Representatives of *England*, in Parliament assembled, to oppose Every Arbitrary Encroachment upon the *Legal Liberties* and *Properties* of the Subject:——That, by degrees, and by the Concurrence of many Accidents, the Passions, and Rage,

and Revenge of *Some*, by the help of mutual *Provocations*, mix'd themselves too much in the Conteſt: —— That Ambitious and Deſigning and Deſperate Men took occaſion from hence to ſet their own Machines on work: —— That the various and contradictory Schemes of *Belief* and *Worſhip*, embraced at that Time, (All equally honour'd with the Name of *Religion*,) were call'd in to heat the Imaginations of Men, and to help forward the common Ruine: —That at length this ended in the Deſtruction of the *Legal Conſtitution*; in confounding even all Appearance of Freedom in what remain'd of a *Parliament*; in an *Uſurp'd Power*, ſupported by *Force* againſt the Conſent of the Nation, and with the Abhorrence of the greateſt Friends to *Legal Liberty*; and in the *Murther* of the

KING,

KING, againſt the Voices of *All*, but Such as then began to find themſelves to have no Security but from an *Arm'd Force*: A *Fact*, which as I truly deteſt; and am led to do ſo by all the *Principles* I know any thing of: ſo, if any Words of mine could aggravate it, conſider'd in all its Circumſtances, They never ſhould be wanting. Theſe are the Main Parts of the Hiſtory now before Us; upon which I ſhall proceed to build ſome *Obſervations*. And,

I. I ſhall take leave to Warn againſt One Uſe which may ſometimes have been made of *this* Part of our Hiſtory; and That is, The arguing from the Bad Event of Things, contrary to the Wiſhes and Deſigns of the Beſt and Wiſeſt Men, againſt all ſuch Oppoſition to *Illegal Encroachments*, and *Arbitrary*

Proceedings, as first open'd the Scene. For, As, in *Argument*, nothing is more *injudicious*, than to plead against *One thing*, because *Another thing*, of a quite different Nature, succeeded to It, thro' the wicked Designs of some Men, and the unaccountable Concurrence of a thousand *Accidents*: So, in *Political* Affairs, nothing can be more *fatal*, than to draw a *Conclusion*, from such Events, which must lay the Foundation of Uninterrupted and Hopeless Slavery. The Nature and Reason of Things abhorrs such an *Inference*; which would at once take away all the Right of a *Free Nation*; and make their Meeting together in *Parliament*, only a more *Solemn Form* of *Absolute Submission* to whatever the *Will* of Another shall lay upon them. *All* in the Administration of Government, who are

Wise,

Wiſe, would not wiſh to have ſuch a Temptation to *Evil* laid in their way: *All*, who are *Good*, would even oppoſe and prevent ſuch a dangerous Piece of *Servile Subjection*: and *All*, who are *Bad* enough to wiſh for it, deſerve for that very Reaſon to have the *Terror* of the *Contrary* before their Eyes; that ſo, what They will not refrain from for *Conſcience*, yet for *Wrath's Sake* may be avoided. Let *that* Leſſon, therefore, of *Good*, remain untouch'd, which under an *Adminiſtration*, by which the *Liberties* and *Laws* of the *Country* are preſerv'd unviolated, can do no hurt; and under *One*, which aſſumes the Power of acting *without* or *againſt* Law, is of Abſolute Neceſſity to prevent *Public Ruine*.

THERE is the leſs Occaſion for *Argument* upon *this Head*, becauſe the

the *Beſt* of *Thoſe Hiſtorians*, and Other Writers, who have ſhewn the greateſt Warmth againſt what followed, yet have been far from condemning thoſe *Beginnings* of Zeal for the *Public*, which tended in their natural Conſequences to the laſting Good of the *King* and the *Whole Body*; and could not have been diverted from attaining that End, but by the Unreaſonableneſs and private Views of ſuch on each Side, as had nothing leſs at Heart than either the *Greatneſs* of their *King*, or the *Good* of their *Country*: Two Things, which in our Conſtitution are ſo happily *join'd together*, that They can never *be put aſunder*.

And what is ſtill a Greater Conſolation, is, that, tho' ſuch *Leſſons* of *Subjection* may have been taught by Perſons of Leiſure, little vers'd in the Affairs of humane Life,

yet

yet We have ſeen with Pleaſure that All Sorts, and *Parties*, (if I muſt uſe that Word,) of Men amongſt Us, have, (to their Honour be it ſpoken) in their ſeveral turns, and as conſtantly as any Opportunity offer'd it ſelf, openly and zealouſly made oppoſition to Any Attempts, which They either knew, or imagin'd, to affect the known Laws and Liberties of their Country. Nay, it muſt be acknowledg'd, that *None* have ſhewn more of this Spirit *in Parliament*, than *Thoſe* who have ſeem'd fearful of giving too great Encouragement to *Liberty*, for fear of the ill Conſequences of it: And it ought ever to be accounted one Part of their great Glory, that, *out* of *Parliament*, in the greateſt and happieſt Struggle for *Public Liberty*, that the preſent Generation, or perhaps any other, ever was witneſs

neſs to, *Their Part* was great and remarkable, in oppoſing the Encroachments of *Arbitrary Power*, and even in inviting an Arm'd Force to make that Oppoſition ſucceſsful: The only appearing Difference between *Them* and *Others*, if we may judge by *Practice*, being This, that, whilſt They are Both equally jealous of Every ſuppos'd Attempt againſt their Liberties, the *One* ſort may imagine *That* to be ſo, which the *Other* do not; and the *One* ſort may be fearful leſt the Defenſe of their own *Practice* ſhould impreſs too great a Senſe of *Liberty* upon the Minds of Men, whilſt the *Other* may think it beſt not only to vindicate what is in it ſelf praiſe-worthy, but to ſcatter the Light of *Legal Liberty* into all Corners of the Land, and to inſpire the Love of it into the Heart of Every Subject. If

If We therefore, consider such Lessons of Submission with regard to the Practice of the Wisest and Best on *all Sides*; We may see how *Vain*, as well as how *Reproachful* on All equally, they are: If we consider them in a *Political* Light; They present Us with nothing but Certain Slavery without any possible *Chance* for the contrary: If We consider them in the way of *Argument* merely; They are no better than *This*, That We ought not to do what is necessary for the preservation of a Whole Nation, because it may happen that We may be ruined afterwards in another way; or, That a Man ought not to save himself from present Imminent Death, because it is possible that in the Struggle He may put himself into a *Fever* which may afterwards prove mor-

tal; Or, That a *Good Thing* ought not to be attempted, becauſe a *Bad Thing* may poſſibly happen ſome Time afterwards, which is neither the natural Conſequence of the *Former*, nor could be foreſeen by the Wiſeſt of Men. This leads us to obſerve,

II. The Unreaſonableneſs of caſting the Reproach of this Day's Fact, and of every Thing before and after it, upon the Principles of *True Liberty*, in general; and upon the *Defenders* of them: Whereas it will appear, upon a ſerious Conſideration, (however it may ſound at firſt hearing,) That, of *all* Men, *Theſe* are led by their *Principles*, if they underſtand them, to an utter and ſettled Diſapprobation of what They have the Reproach of favouring.

vouring. For, what is the *Liberty* contended for, by all Men of Honeſty, and Underſtanding? Not Licentiouſneſs: Not a Right to overturn *Laws* and *Conſtitutions*, whenever Paſſion or Rage dictate, and the favourable Opportunity of *Power* offers it ſelf: Much leſs, a *Licence*, under Pretenſe of *Liberty*, to deſtroy all Freedom in Parliament; to ſet up an Arbitrary Power, and maintain it by Force of Arms. Nothing of all this; but every thing contrary to it. It is the *Liberty* which reſults from being governed by *Laws* made by *Conſent*; the *Liberty* which reſults from theſe *Laws* being ſettled in ſuch a manner, that the Innocent ſhall always know their own Defenſe from Injuries, and even the moſt *Guilty* know before-hand

upon what their Guilt ſhall be founded: It is the ſecure Enjoyment of *Property*, and *Privileges* granted by Laws, free from every thing that looks like Violence.

The *End* of theſe *Laws* is to guard againſt the worſt of all worldly Evils, *Arbitrary Power*, in whatſoever Shapes or Degrees it may pretend to ſhew itſelf, and upon whatſoever *Pretext* it may found ſuch Pretenſions; to preſerve Judgment and Juſtice from the Influences of Paſſion and Private Reſentment; and Puniſhment it ſelf, in the Caſe even of the meaneſt Subject, from becoming Cruelty. A Scheme of happineſs, not known in the Nations round about Us, either under *Abſolute Monarchies*, or *Republics*; depending, one would judge

judge from hence, entirely upon the Nature of that *Mixt Form* under which We live.

But what was the Caſe now before Us? We find plainly that a *Fact*, as Shocking in it ſelf, as it was oppoſite to the Temper of *Engliſhmen*, and contrary to the Maxims of the *Engliſh Government*, could not be ſo much as attempted, till the Freedom of *Parliament* was totally deſtroy'd; the *Balances* which keep our Government in an even Situation, torn aſunder; and an *Arm'd Force* made the ſupport of what remain'd of *Civil Government*.

This Proceeding is much more agreeable to the Maxims of Thoſe who think and teach (if any ſuch ſtill remain) that *Arbitrary Power* is the beſt and fitteſt for the Government of Mankind; than to the Sentiments of *Others* of a contrary

Judg-

Judgment. For in this Caſe, All of *Legiſlation*, as well as of *Government*, that remain'd, was influenced and ſupported by mere *Force*, which is always *Abſolute*. Nay, The Crime and Evil of *Uſurpation* it ſelf, upon their own *Scheme*, is ſo qualified in proceſs of Time, that *Preſcription*, or *Poſſeſſion* maintain'd for a Term of years, relieves Them at length of very much of their *Firſt Abhorrence* of it. Whereas, No Length of Time, No Tenure of *Preſcription*, can reconcile the minds of Thoſe who underſtand what *Legal Liberty* is, to the total Deſtruction of a *Legal Conſtitution*, and to the Settlement of mere Power. The very Thing which, at the End of ſome Years, would have comforted *Others*, if a long Poſſeſſion of Arbitrary Power had continued amongſt Us, ſeems

to

to *Them* so big with *Public Misery*, and *Calamity*, that it heightens and inflames their Detestation of all Proceedings which were thought necessary to such an Evil: an Evil, which, if one Cunning and Daring *Usurper* had been succeeded by *Another, might probably have cleav'd to Us, and our Seed for ever*; and have come at length to have been the Subject of Fulsom *Panegyric* to All the Admirers of Uncontrollable Power; and left to be lamented *in private* only by Such as *Those* whose *Principles* are sometimes reproach'd as if They favour'd what is absolutely inconsistent with them. This leads Us

III. To observe the perfect *Consistency* which there is between a well-grounded Disapprobation of that Scene of Things, which We this

this Day lament; and a ſettled and hearty Approbation of that *Great Tranſaction* in our own Days, upon which the preſent Eſtabliſhment of our *Conſtitution* is founded. There may be Thoſe, who are ſo little uſed to conſider a Cauſe thoroughly, and to purſue it thro' all its Conſequences, that They may be ſurpriz'd to hear a Thing ſo diſtant from what they have been uſed to. But yet it will be found certainly true, that *Theſe two* Things are ſo far from being *Inconſiſtent*; that the very Same Principles which lead Men of Conſideration to Approve the *Latter*, direct and influence Them to Diſapprove the *Former*. For Inſtance, The Maxim that there is in the Whole Nation a Right to preſerve Themſelves and their *Conſtitution* of *Government*, from

Ruine,

Ruine, is ſo far from implying in it, that a *Particular Party* of a Nation has a *Right* to poſſeſs itſelf of the *Governing Power* by *Force*, or *Trick*; or to tear in Pieces a *Legal Conſtitution*; or to commit Acts of Violence againſt Every Branch of that *Conſtitution*, as well as againſt *Private* Men: *It is ſo far*, I ſay, from implying theſe things, that it ſtrongly implies, and inforces the Contrary. As therefore, in the *One* Caſe, there was the Concurrence of All Ranks, and All the Differing Sorts, amongſt Us, *againſt* all the *Arm'd Force* in the Land, contending whoſe Cries and Calls ſhould be loudeſt for Relief; and in the *Other*, the Conjunction of a *Few*, ſecur'd only by their having all the *Arm'd Force*, then in being, on their Side: As, on the *One* Hand, the Concurrence of the *Whole* was directly and truly deſign'd for the Preſervation of our *Legal Conſti-*

tution; and, on the *Other* hand, the Views of particular Men were to be carry'd on by the *Deſtruction* of that Conſtitution, and the extinguiſhing all Freedom of *Parliament*: As the *One* ended in the antient Form of *Legal Government*, and a ſtronger Eſtabliſhment of the *Rights* of *Subjects*, and *Parliaments*; and the *Other* in a direct Avowal of *Arbitrary Power*, where any of the Legal Rights or Privileges, belonging to *Parliament* or *People*, ſtood in the Way: As there are Theſe, and the like, *Eſſential*, and Irreconcileable Differences between the *One* and the *Other*; (too many to be now enumerated;) it is evident that the *Proceedings* of the *Whole Nation*, in the *One* Caſe, ſtand approv'd and ſupported by the *ſame Principles*, which lead moſt effectually to the Condemnation of the Proceedings of a *Part* poſſeſs'd of *Power*, in the *Other* Caſe. But,

IV. As

IV. As *these Things happen'd to* our Forefathers *for Enſamples*; ſo let Them be *Enſamples* to *Us*, not only to chuſe what was *Good* in the *Conduct* of *Some*, but to avoid what was Evil in *Others*, and what indeed hindred all the *Good* which was propos'd. The *Great Leſſon* is, That on all Sides Men ſuffer not their Perſonal Reſentments, Paſſions, Diſappointments, or Private Intereſts, to enter into their Conteſts, where the Public is concern'd: At leaſt, to guard againſt their Influences, as much as it is poſſible for Humane Nature to do. I ſay, *As much as poſſible*, well knowing how hard a Leſſon this is, and how ſeldom the Practice of it is to be hoped for. There is ſomething in *Self-Love* ſo deeply rooted, that Private Intereſts and Private Views have often a ſilent and effectual Influence upon Men, even when their Mouvements are not diſtinctly felt within. Nor would I be un-

derſtood to inſinuate that it is always impoſſible that *Theſe* ſhould happen to fall in with what is truly for the *Public Good*. But this is by Accident: and it being really the Satisfaction of our *Paſſions*, which gives *Life* to all Proceedings in which *Theſe* mix themſelves, the *Experiment* upon this Account is always dangerous. For the Nature and Operation of Theſe Principles is ſuch, that They will obſcure or diſcolour the brighteſt *Object*; They will make *That* appear *reaſonable*, which is *profitable*, or agreeable to ſome Preſent View; and throw a Diſgrace upon whatever does not tend to ſatisfy Themſelves. Take away *Theſe*; and *Public Good* appears Naked and open to every Eye, free from all Difficulties and Embarraſsments: But let *Theſe* enter in their full Strength; and *Public Good* becomes only *Another Word* for our own *Private Views* and *Paſſions*. But of All *Principles* of

Action

Action in humane Nature, *Revenge* for Perſonal Injuries is ſeen to make the greateſt Havock in all Public Diſputes and Diſorders. For, as it is naturally *blind* againſt all Light, and *Deaf* to all Argument; ſo, it can be Sated by Nothing but ſome one particular *Sacrifice* which it propoſes; after which is compaſſed, it generally ends in Shame and Repentance. The Power of theſe Principles is known to be ſo great in Civil Affairs, that one main Foundation of all *Civil Government*, is, That Men ought not to be the Avengers of their own Perſonal Injuries; And this Fundamental Maxim of *Society* is ſacredly obſerv'd through the Whole Tenor of our *Engliſh Laws*; and never tranſgreſs'd or neglected but upon Extraordinary Occaſions.

How terrible was the Force of *Theſe* ſeen to be in the Days of our *Fathers*? Eſpecially, when they were ſet on Fire by that *miſtaken Zeal*,

Zeal, (the true and genuine *Enthuſiaſm*,) which at once *inflames* and *conſecrates* the *Paſſions*; at once actuates them into *Rage* to all extremities, and ſanctifies that *Rage* by the ſacred Names of *God* and *Religion*: By which it came to paſs that the Cauſe of every heated Imagination became the Cauſe of GOD; that whatever Men thought well of, in Religious Affairs, for Themſelves, They came to think it their Duty to force upon Others; and that *Mutual Toleration* was declared by *Some*, who once wanted it themſelves, the *Greateſt* of all the *Monſters* which thoſe unhappy Times brought forth.

WE have much to learn from theſe Things; and much to avoid. Let us imitate all that Zeal of our *Forefathers* for our *Legal Conſtitution*, which was viſibly deſign'd, and naturally tended, to prevent future Encroachments of Power, either *againſt*, or *without*, Law:

And

And let us fly far from all thoſe *Methods* which naturally paved the Way to the *Loſs* of all that *Freedom* which they pretended to ſecure. Let us value our Liberties, as Honeſt Men: Not only for the Pleaſure and Security They afford to Ourſelves; but as a *Truſt* repos'd in Us for our *Poſterity*, much more *Sacred* and *Important* than Any other Legacy of this World, that we can leave them. Let not our *Paſſions* be our firſt Inſtructors in any Step of our *Public Conduct*: But let them Themſelves be inſtructed and guided by our *Reaſon*. Let our *Love* to what we juſtly approve, and chuſe for ourſelves, in *Religion*, engage Us to ſuch Charity and Forbearance towards *Others*, as may demonſtrate our Gratitude for our own Happineſs; and our deep Senſe that Whatſoever we may account the *Cauſe* of *God* is to be promoted by None but the *Methods* of *God*.

In

In a Word, As *Britons*, enjoying the Bleſſings of a *Conſtitution* unknown to all the Countries around Us, even where the Word *Liberty* is ſtill us'd; and, As Chriſtians, enjoying the Light and Liberty of the *Goſpel*; Let us ſecure, as much as can be, the Repoſe and Comforts of this preſent Life by valuing and preſerving that *Form* of *Government* which adminiſters ſo much Good to Us; and let Us preſs, with unwearied Steps, to the Rewards of the *Life which is to come*, (free from all the Viciſſitudes and Confuſions of the happieſt Kingdoms of this World) by *walking worthy of our Holy Vocation*, and adorning our Profeſſion by a truly *Chriſtian* and unblameble Converſation.

Which God *grant, for the Sake of* Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord*, &c.

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